6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Winters are long and cold, summers short and hot. Extreme temperature changes, up to 40 degrees, occur frequently during any season and within any twenty-four hour period. Winter temperatures, from November through March, average 24 degrees Fahrenheit but may go as low as 50 degrees below zero, while frequent chinook winds often raise the temperature to 50 degrees above and rapidly melt any accumulated snow. Summer temperatures range into the 100's but again, rapid fluctuations accompany sudden storms. The earliest frosts are apt to occur in September and the latest in May, giving an average of 100 to 102 frost free days annually. The area is subject to persistent westerly winds, which can attain velocities to seventy-five miles per hour.

All in all this is a region of definite and intense weather, be it hot, cold, wet, dry, calm, or windy. A man can either lean into the wind or go with it, either seek protection from the cold and heat or endure these when necessary. The climate is an environmental phenomenon that requires active accommodation.

Regional Population and Economy

The reservation includes portions of two counties. Approximately 70 percent of Glacier county's 2,974 square mile area and perhaps 40 to 45 percent of its about 12,000 population are included within reservation boundaries. The southern portion of the reservation incorporates approximately 17 percent of Pondera county's 1,643 square mile area and about 7 percent of its estimated 7,800 population. Major concentrations of people in the area are in its small towns, the largest of which is Cut Bank, the Glacier county seat, with a population nearing 5,000 persons, followed by Browning with an estimated 2,400, East Glacier near the western reservation line with perhaps 350, and Valier, the county seat of Pondera, with about 750 persons. Other towns and hamlets will be introduced later.

The main line of the Burlington-Northern Railroad (formerly the Great Northern Railway) from Chicago to the Pacific coast transverses the Blackfeet reservation, and major east-west U.S. Route 2, parallels the railroad. Both connect Browning, the major trade center on the reservation, with cities to the east and west. U.S. Route 89 runs through the reservation from north to south, connecting Browning with Canadian highways to Banff and Calgary to the north and providing rapid access to Great Falls, Montana, 125 miles to the southeast.

An airport at Cut Bank, 36 miles east of Browning and just across the reservation border, and landing strips on the reservation, at Starr School and Babb, are available to private and nonscheduled aircraft, and an additional air strip is planned for East Glacier. Scheduled airline service is available at Kalispel, 100 miles to the west, and at Great Falls.

Telephone, telegraph, radio and television provide ties into the network of national communication. Television comes in from Great Falls and from a Canadian station at Lethbridge, Alberta. Radio stations in both nearby towns and distant cities provide a variety of programs. *The Great Falls Tribune*, a daily, and weekly publications of *The Cut Bank Pioneer Press* and Browning's *Glacier Reporter*, provide newspaper coverage for reservation readers.

Transportation and Communication

491 [496] [366] The Great Northern Railway's main line to the Pacific coast transverses the Blackfeet reservation, and a major east-west national highway, No. 2, parallels the railroad. Both connect Browning, the major trade center on the reservation, with cities to the east and west. U.S. Highway No. 89 runs through the reservation and Browning from north to south, connecting with Canadian highways to Banff and Calgary to the north and providing rapid access to Great Falls, Montana, 125 miles to the southeast.

508 An airport at Cut Bank, 36 miles east of Browning and just across the reservation border, provides airline service for the area, connecting with major airlines at Great Falls. Landing strips are available on the reservation, at Starr School and Babb, for private and non-scheduled planes.

207 [206] Telephone, telegraph, radio and television provide ties into the network of national communication. Television comes in from Great Falls and from a Canadian station at Lethbridge, Alberta. Radio stations in both nearby towns and distant cities provide a variety of programs.

Economy

311 [433] [231] [241] Ranching and farming are the major economic pursuits of the people of these counties. The northern and western portions contain excellent natural grazing areas and are extensively used by both residents and outsiders for grazing of beef cattle, sheep and horses. The eastern third of Glacier county and the greater portion of Pondera are subject to lesser amounts of rainfall than the more westerly